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Disarm Jerusalem, Not Gaza. Rima Najjar

From Corpus Separatum to Settler Sovereignty: A Case for Indictment

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***Author's Note**: This essay argues that disarmament must begin in Jerusalem—the epicenter of supremacist sovereignty and settler-colonial control—not in Gaza, which remains besieged and starved. It traces the betrayal of the 1947 corpus separatum designation, documents the ongoing erasure of Palestinian civic and cultural life, and indicts the international complicity that sustains it. The essay then outlines four modalities of resistance—armed, legal, international, and cultural—each refusing not only Trump's plan, but the Jewish supremacist ideology that made it possible. What matters is not diplomatic tone or strategic optics. What matters is the ideological clarity of the rejection.*

Opening: It isn't Gaza that should be disarmed. It's Jerusalem.

When Western powers — namely the United States, the United Kingdom, and France — through Zionist machinations first tried to impose the 1947 UN Partition Plan on Arab Palestine, Resolution 181 proposed dividing Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem designated as a *corpus separatum*: a demilitarized city under international administration.

The plan was drafted not in consultation with Palestinians, but in defiance of their overwhelming rejection. It was engineered by colonial powers who had already failed to protect Jewish refugees in Europe and now sought to offload their moral debts onto Palestine. The architects — **Harry S. Truman**, **Ernest Bevin**, and **Georges Bidault** — must have had an inkling that Zionist exclusive sovereignty over Jerusalem would turn it into a flashpoint of settler-colonial expansion and Jewish supremacy. As it turned out, they were right.

After occupying East Jerusalem in 1967, Israel moved quickly to erase Palestinian political and civic presence. It dissolved the elected Palestinian municipal council, deported officials like Mayor **Rawhi al-Khatib**, and replaced local governance with Israeli administrative control.

And the takeover didn't stop at bureaucracy. Israel began systematically expelling Palestinian residents, revoking their residency rights under arbitrary criteria, and denying family reunification. Entire neighborhoods—Silwan, Sheikh Jarrah—were targeted for Jewish immigrant settler expansion, with homes demolished under the pretext of lacking permits Palestinians were never allowed to obtain.

This is an open chapter in Palestine's history. The complicity is not historical—it is active.

The **U.S. Embassy move to Jerusalem**, the **Abraham Accords**, and the **EU's silence** on

residency revocations all signal endorsement. Corporations like **Caterpillar** and **Hyundai** supply the machinery of demolition. **UNESCO's** designation of Jerusalem as "shared heritage" is undermined by its failure to protect Palestinian access.

Furthermore, Israel weaponizes access to holy sites: Muslim worshippers face military checkpoints and age restrictions at **Al-Aqsa**, while Christian Palestinians are routinely denied permits to visit holy sites in **Bethlehem** and **Jerusalem**. Surveillance, land confiscation, and settler violence are daily tools of control.

The goal is to continue to Judaize the city, to erase its Arab Palestinian character, and to make indigenous life untenable—going to the extreme of digging tunnels beneath Haram al-Sharif in pursuit of a mythical Jewish temple.

Israeli authorities erase municipal records from East Jerusalem's city hall, confiscate keys at checkpoints, and deny recognition of Palestinian property deeds in court.

Israeli maps rename streets, erase neighborhoods, and redraw boundaries to fabricate permanence. But cartography is not sovereignty. It is a tool of it—and it can be refused.

Jerusalem was meant to be protected from sovereignty — not subjected to its supremacist execution.

So, let us be clear.

> If disarmament is to mean anything, it must begin with the city where the settler-colonial Jewish supremacist regime is headquartered.
>
> If disarmament is to mean anything, it must begin with the city that was meant to be protected from Zionist sovereignty, not the one besieged and crushed by it.

Resistance Is Vital and It Continues in Many Forms

Armed Resistance

Intensified not as escalation but as insistence: **we will not be erased.**

In Gaza, the **Al-Qassam Brigades** and **Palestinian Islamic Jihad** continued operations despite catastrophic losses, framing their actions as existential defense rather than tactical aggression. In **Khan Yunis**, new formations like the **Counterterrorism Strike Force (CSF)** emerged, declaring their intent to resist both Hamas repression and Israeli occupation.

Tribal militias such as those led by **Husam al-Astal** and **Yasser Abu Shabab** — though controversial — signaled a fracturing of control and a refusal to accept externally imposed governance models. The **Resistance Committees**, led by **Ayman Al-Shishniya**, rejected the Trump administration's postwar plan as a "recycling of the Deal of the Century," warning that international blessings for the plan amounted to complicity in genocide and ethnic cleansing.

Legal and Diplomatic Resistance

Sharpened its indictments: **naming genocide, naming apartheid, naming complicity.**

In September 2025, the **UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry** concluded that Israel had committed genocide in Gaza, citing four of the five acts defined by the **Genocide Convention** — including deliberate starvation, destruction of infrastructure, and targeting of children.

Amnesty International echoed this, calling for an end to the "political economy enabling genocide," and naming corporations complicit in the supply chain of destruction — from **Boeing** and **Lockheed Martin** to **Elbit Systems** and **Palantir**.

Legal scholars and human rights bodies convened in forums like the **Jurists for Palestine** webinar to explore peacekeeping mechanisms and civilian protection strategies, emphasizing the need for third-state accountability and international criminal prosecution.

International Solidarity

Fractured and reformed, with students, workers, and artists declaring: **we will not be neutral.**

On September 22, 2025, nearly **one million people across Italy** staged a general strike in support of Palestine, shutting down ports, train stations, and major junctions under the slogan *"Blocchiamo Tutto"* ("Let's block everything").

In **Berlin**, artists projected images of Gaza's destruction onto embassy walls, while in **Beirut**, refugee-led collectives organized teach-ins and cultural vigils.

Education International issued a global call for solidarity with Palestinian teachers and students, condemning the destruction of every higher education institution in Gaza and the killing of over **10,000 children**.

And in the Mediterranean, the Global Sumud Flotilla—a civilian-led fleet of over 40 vessels carrying 500 activists from more than 40 countries—set sail to break Israel's naval blockade of Gaza. Despite drone attacks off the coast of Greece and aggressive interception by Israeli warships near Gaza's exclusion zone, the flotilla is pressing forward, broadcasting live footage and refusing to turn back.

Among those aboard are climate activist Greta Thunberg, South African MP Mandla Mandela, and French-Palestinian MEP Rima Hassan. Their mission is not only symbolic; it is juridical: to deliver humanitarian aid and to indict the blockade as a tool of starvation and siege.

"We sail on undeterred by Israeli threats and tactics of intimidation," the flotilla declared. "The humanitarian demand to break the blockade cannot be walked back to port."

Cultural Resistance

Surged — **poets, illustrators, archivists, meme-makers** — each refusing the terms of the plan by refusing its grammar.

Artists like **Lina Abojaradeh** used murals, comics, and poetry to evoke radical empathy and defiance, declaring that *"art gives us a space to stop. To feel. To recognize the humanity in the people suffering."*

The deaths of cultural figures like **Heba Abu Naha** and **Refaat Alareer** — whose poem *"If I Must Die"* became a global rallying cry — marked not just personal loss but cultural devastation.

Visual artists such as **Sliman Mansour** and **Abdul Hay Mosallam Zarara**continued to be cited as foundational voices in the aesthetics of resistance, their works circulating in protests, classrooms, and digital archives.

Among the most incisive voices in cultural resistance is Palestinian cartoonist **Mohammad Sabaaneh**, whose stark black-and-white illustrations refuse euphemism and demand indictment. His work refuses to normalize ethnic cleansing.

What Matters Is the Ideological Clarity of the Rejection of Trump's Plan

We should not have been shocked at Trump's plan, but we were — because even those of us who have spent decades witnessing and recording **Israel's ethnic cleansing of Palestinians** — of annexation, of demographic engineering, of mass incarcerations, of checkpoints, of house demolitions, of land confiscation, of settler rapaciousness — still feel the sting when the mask slips entirely.

Our grief is the grief of recognition.
The ache of seeing what we already witnessed and knew, now stripped of pretense and doublespeak — the genocide in Gaza, the mass displacement, the starvation, the targeting of journalists, hospitals, schools, cemeteries.

Trump's plan is a declaration that the machinery of erasure no longer requires euphemism.

And so, after the shock and grief, we mobilized again to reject. To refuse. To clarify.
From Gaza, from the camps, from the diaspora, from the streets of Ramallah and the refugee corridors of Berlin and Beirut, came a chorus — **not of surprise, but of refusal.**

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Featured image: This is what sovereignty looks like under a Jewish supremacist regime. Disarm Jerusalem, Not Gaza. (Source: Rima Najjar)

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